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REQUEST FOR EXTENSION OF, AND ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR, THE UNFPA COUNTRY PROGRAMME FOR BOLIVIA

Report of the Executive Director

I. BACKGROUND

1. UNFPA requests that the programme of assistance for Bolivia be extended by one year until the end of 1997, in addition to the extension through the end of 1996 that was already approved by the Executive Board in March 1996. The primary aim of the additional extension would be to achieve harmonization with the programming cycles of UNDP and UNICEF in 1998. It should be noted that this second extension is a result of UNDP's decision to extend its programme by one year. UNFPA also requests that the funding approval authority be increased by $1.9 million, of which $1.7 million would be programmed from UNFPA's regular resources, and $200,000 would be sought from multi-bilateral sources, which a bilateral donor has already informally agreed to cover. The additional funding authorization would cover the additional year of the programme and would facilitate transition to the next programme of assistance, to be presented to the Executive Board in 1997.

2. In June 1991, the Governing Council approved the first UNFPA programme of assistance for Bolivia, in the amount of $10 million over a five-year period (1991-1995). In March 1996, the Executive Board approved a programme extension until the end of 1996, raising the total funding approval authority for the period 1991-1996 to $12 million, of which $11 million would be programmed from UNFPA's regular resources. Approval of the extension now being proposed would bring the total approval authority for the period 1991-1997 up to $13.9 million. This proposed

extension is being presented according to the workplan categories in force when the original country programme was approved.

3. Since the Government launched its *Plan Vida* in 1994 aimed at reducing maternal and child mortality, Bolivia has demonstrated a substantial increase in its absorption and expenditure capacity as compared with the first three years of the programme. Expenditures averaged somewhat more than $1 million a year for these first three years (1991-1993) but picked up substantially after that, reaching $2.5 million in 1995. The programme, is therefore, expected to have no difficulty in effectively absorbing the proposed additional funding.

II. PROPOSED ACTIVITIES

4. In addition to achieving harmonization of the programme cycles of UNDP, UNICEF and UNFPA in 1998, the proposed extension would provide UNFPA with the opportunity to ensure that future UNFPA assistance would adequately respond to the new challenges posed by the major reforms that are now taking place in Bolivia, including those resulting from the recently adopted laws on popular participation and administrative decentralization. It would also help to consolidate the achievements of the ongoing programme.

5. The laws on popular participation and administrative decentralization, approved in 1994 and 1995, respectively, envisage the transfer of authority, responsibilities and resources from the central level to the departmental and municipal levels. This process actively encourages community participation in programme planning and implementation, including resource allocation. Other initiatives with similar intent include the reform of the education sector initiated in 1994, the 1994-1997 programme for the reduction of maternal, perinatal and child mortality (the *Plan Vida*) and the 1996-1997 programme of strategic action for human development.

6. During the preparation of the next programme of assistance, due attention will be given to the ways in which UNFPA could support the decentralization process, especially as they concern implementation of population and reproductive health activities. Emphasis would be given to strengthening community participation and enhancing technical and management capacities related to reproductive health programmes at the departmental and municipal levels. UNFPA would seek to further promote and consolidate national consensus on population and development and support the integration of key population and reproductive health issues into the formulation and implementation of departmental and municipal policies and programmes. UNFPA would also advocate for the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and of the Platform of Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women in close collaboration with government institutions as well as non-governmental organizations (NGOs), including women's organizations and networks.

7. In order to further consolidate the achievements of the current programme of assistance, UNFPA would continue to support the efforts of the National Health Secretariat in reducing Bolivia's high maternal mortality rate (the second highest in the region) through continuing integration of reproductive health education and services at the primary health care level. The activities would especially focus on improving the quality of reproductive health care while paying attention to sociocultural aspects in order to take account of the cultural heterogeneity of the country. Attention would also be given to strengthening local operational and managerial capacities. UNFPA would continue supporting innovative approaches to adolescents' reproductive health care. All activities would aim at strengthening the implementation of a comprehensive reproductive health care approach.

8. UNFPA would help consolidate the efforts of the National Education Secretariat to introduce population education into formal and non-formal education programmes in the context of the recent education reform. Building on the achievements of past UNFPA assistance in incorporating population and sex education into curricula and school texts at the primary school level, UNFPA would provide support for in-service training of pedagogic advisers, as well as for teachers' pre-service training. At the secondary level, UNFPA would provide support for incorporating population and sex education into the revised curricula. UNFPA would also continue promoting the incorporation of population and sexuality education contents in alternative education programmes of state institutions and NGOs. This would include support for the curricula revision of the adult education, alternative youth education and social communication programmes of the Under-Secretariat of Alternative Education.

9. In all aspects of the UNFPA programme, special attention would be given to the development of national capacity and to ensuring the sustainability of the supported activities. Particular emphasis would be placed on ensuring sensitivity to sociocultural and gender considerations, including paying special attention to the specific needs of different indigenous populations. UNFPA support would include funding for certain programme support staff, in order to strengthen national execution and build up longer term capacity to sustain the programme.

10. Taking into account the lessons learned so far from the implementation of the ongoing programme, the next programme of assistance, to be proposed in 1997, would start to carefully focus activities in selected areas and priority groups. The aim would be to focus assistance in the area of reproductive health and to target the geographical areas and population groups most in need, taking into account the country's sociocultural diversity. Special attention would be given to ensure adequate baseline data for measuring the impact of UNFPA assistance to Bolivia. In preparation of a new programme of assistance, and in close coordination with other donors, the programme would also support the development of a reproductive health information, education and communication (IEC) strategy for service delivery points.

11. UNFPA proposes to extend the country programme for Bolivia through 1997 and to increase the funding approval authority by $1.9 million, of which $1.7 million would be programmed from UNFPA's regular resources. This would bring the programme for the period 1991-1997 to a total amount of $13.9 million. The following table shows how that amount would be accommodated by programme area (in millions of $):

Sectors	Approved by Governing Council, 1991	Expenditures 1991-1995	Approved extension for 1996	Additional funds requested, 1997		Total 1993-1997
				Regular resources	*Other resources*	
Maternal and child health and family planning	4.1	4.0	2.7	1.0	.2	8.0
Information, education and communication	1.6	1.6	(.1)**	.4	-	1.9
Data collection and analysis	1.9	2.0	(.4)	.1	-	1.6
Population policy formulation	1.2	-	-	-	-	1.2
Women, population and development	1.0	.1	-	.2	-	1.2
Programme reserve	.2	.3*	(.2)	-	-	-
TOTAL	10.0	8.0	2.0	1.7	.2	13.9

* *Programme reserve was expended on MCH/FP activities.*

** *Amounts in parentheses represent redistribution of resources to other sectors.*

III. RECOMMENDATION

12. The Executive Director recommends that the Executive Board approve the extension of the programme of assistance for Bolivia by one additional year, to the end of 1997, and increase the funding approval authority of the programme by $1.9 million, of which $1.7 million would be programmed from UNFPA regular resources, subject to the availability of resources, and $200,000 would be sought from multi-bilateral resources.